



Office of Juvenile Justice
and Delinquency Prevention

TRIBAL HEALING TO WELLNESS COURTS

PERFORMANCE REPORT

July-December 2020

Publication date: Fall 2022

WORKING FOR YOUTH JUSTICE AND SAFETY

VISION STATEMENT

OJJDP envisions a nation where our children are free from crime and violence. If they come into contact with the justice system, the contact should be rare, fair, and beneficial to them.

MISSION STATEMENT

OJJDP provides national leadership, coordination, and resources to prevent and respond to youth delinquency and victimization. The Office helps states, localities, and tribes develop effective and equitable juvenile justice systems that create safer communities and empower youth to lead productive lives.

This report was produced by Booz Allen Hamilton under contract number DJO-BJA-16-S-0272, awarded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this report are those of the contributors and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice. The accuracy of the data in this document is dependent on the precision of grantee data entry. All information included reflects self-reported data provided by OJJDP grantees.

It is important to note that accurate data rely on correct data tracking and entry by the grantees and those agencies reporting to grantees, as such the data and analysis findings provided reflect the information as reported. The Office of Justice Programs makes no representations as to the accuracy or completeness of the data presented, nor does it make any inferences as to the effectiveness of grant funded programs and the associated outcomes.

INTRODUCTION

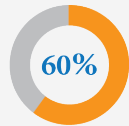
The Tribal Healing to Wellness Courts (THWC) program, administered by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), enhances the capacity of Tribal courts to respond to substance use disorders of Tribal youth under the age of 21. THWC is a specialized, problem-solving court, which uses the juvenile drug court framework to integrate traditional Tribal healing techniques with western substance use treatment. The primary goals of the THWC program include the development of comprehensive, culturally appropriate intervention services for at-risk Tribal youth.¹ THWC grantees create, expand, and strengthen culturally specific approaches within their local juvenile justice system.

OJJDP requires grantees to report youth served, target behaviors, offending, and reoffending outcomes. THWC grantees also report planning activities conducted during their first year of receiving their award; planning activities include training activities and partnership development.

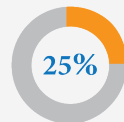
Highlights

244
NUMBER OF
YOUTH SERVED

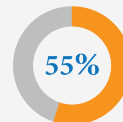
Youth demonstrating
positive behavior
change



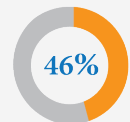
Youth
offending



Youth
reoffending



Awards implementing
an evidence-based
program



OVERVIEW OF AWARD INFORMATION

During the July–December 2020 activity period, OJJDP’s THWC program funded 35 awards with 80 percent of awards completing their reporting requirements (see figure 1). Twenty-eight THWC awards were operational (expending grant funds during the period). The total available funding during the period exceeded \$8.6 million (see figure 1).

Figure 1. Award Details



¹ See *Tribal Healing to Wellness Courts: Treatment Guidelines*
http://www.wellnesscourts.org/files/Treatment%20Guide%202nd%20ed_%202017.pdf.

EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAMS

OJJDP encourages grantees to use evidence-based programs shown, through rigorous evaluation and replication, to be effective at preventing or reducing juvenile delinquency or related risk factors. THWC grantees implement evidence-based programs and practices that utilize culturally based strategies to address individual youth needs.² During the July–December 2020 activity period, 46 percent of THWC awards used one or more evidence-based program or practice.

YOUTH AND FAMILIES SERVED

THWC grantees are required to report on the number of youth and families served during each activity period. During the July–December 2020 activity period, THWC program grantees served a total of 317 youth and families. Seventy-seven percent of individual grantees served were youth ($n = 244$), while 23 percent of those served were family members ($n = 73$).

244

Number of youth served

PROGRAM YOUTH OFFENSES AND RECIDIVISM

Grantees report short-term³ data for program youth who offend and recidivate to gauge the program's success at reducing delinquency and improving outcomes for program participants. During the July–December 2020 activity period, 25 percent of the youth who were tracked offended in the short term (see figure 2), and 55 percent of tracked youth reoffended in the short term (see figure 2).

Figure 2. Short-Term Offending and Reoffending Data

25% of program youth tracked **OFFENDED**

27/106

55% of program youth tracked **REOFFENDED**

28/51

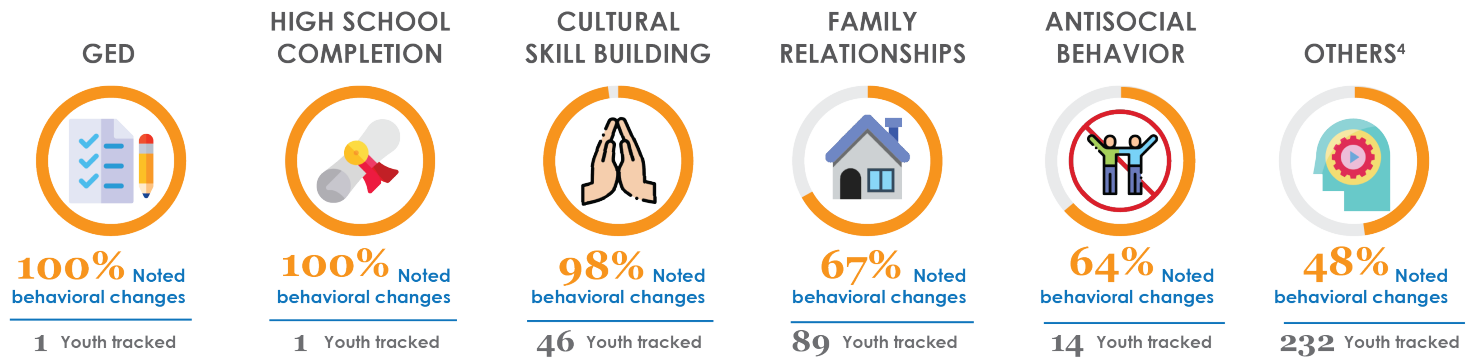
TARGET BEHAVIORS

Youth participating in THWC programs are tracked for short-term behavior changes to measure the program's impact on performance in several targeted areas, such as substance use, school attendance, social behaviors, and cultural skill building. During the July–December 2020 activity period, 100 percent of tracked youth demonstrated the most improvement in General Education Development (GED) and High School Completion (see figure 3). Overall, 60 percent of program youth exhibited a desired change in a targeted behavior.

² <http://www.wellnesscourts.org/files/Tribal%20Healing%20to%20Wellness%20Courts%20The%20Key%20Components.pdf>

³ Short term includes youth tracked for the behavior of interest who received services during the activity period or youth who exited during the activity period.

Figure 3. Outcome Percentages for the Specified Target Behaviors



PLANNING YEAR ACTIVITIES

OJJDP requires THWC grantees engage in program planning activities during the start of their award. The planning phase supports grantees through a strategic planning process designed to identify program challenges and strategies when developing their mission, organizational structure, and action plan. This process allows them to create necessary partnerships for program implementation and sustainability. During the July–December 2020, 14 percent of grantees engaged in planning activities. Collectively, grantees in this planning phase developed 35 new partnerships and trained seven people. During this phase, grantees attend Strat Pak strategic planning sessions.⁵ At Strat Pak, grantees develop a comprehensive plan, which includes a mission and vision statement, logic model, the establishment of an advisory board, and sustainability planning. During the activity period, of the four grantees invited, 50 percent attended Strat Pak. Additionally, 25 percent of grantees in the planning phase attended OJJDP’s Tribal New Grantee Orientation.



⁴ Other target behaviors include social competence, substance use, school attendance, GPA, family functioning, prosocial behavior, community involvement, and job skills.

⁵ <https://www.justice.gov/tribal/file/818046/download>

CONCLUSION

OJJDP's THWC grant program seeks to strengthen the capacity of Tribal courts by applying the Tribal Juvenile Healing to Wellness Court model to develop comprehensive frameworks for addressing substance use and other delinquency issues among at-risk and court-involved Tribal youth. The THWC uses the drug court model and incorporates concepts of wellness to address the specific substance use needs of individual Tribal youth.

OJJDP recognizes Tribal systems present varying challenges and strengths, which can impact or enhance their ability to respond to the needs of Tribal youth. Tribes use OJJDP funds to expand culturally appropriate approaches to provide prevention and intervention services for at-risk and court-involved Tribal youth. The primary goals of the THWC program are to enhance the capacity of Tribal courts to respond to substance use of at-risk and court-involved Tribal youth.

It is important to recognize the impact of the COVID-19 global health pandemic in tribal communities and the limitations of grant recipient's ability to fully implement programs during the July – December 2020 reporting period. The pandemic led to lockdowns in Tribal communities, massive infections, and deaths which resulted in the decline in the number of youth participating in programs.

During the July–December 2020 activity period, 28 operational THWC awards served a total of 317 youth and families. Seventy-seven percent of those served (n = 244) were youth and 23 percent of those served (n = 73) were family members. Fourteen percent of awards conducted planning activities, which resulted in 35 new partnerships and training for 7 individuals. Overall, 60 percent of program youth exhibited a desired change in the targeted behavior during the short term, with youth demonstrating the greatest improvement in cultural skill building/cultural pride, high school completion, and GED. Additionally, 75 percent of youth did not offend in the short term, while 45 percent of youth did not reoffend in the short term. The performance measurement data suggests the THWC program achieved its main objectives of using a Tribal court model to improve youth outcomes.